

Bell Is Under Pressure To 'Go Easy' on Helms

By Jack Nelson
Los Angeles Times

When another VIP tugs at Attorney General Griffin B. Bell's sleeve at a Washington cocktail party these days, chances are it is more than just a friendly greeting.

Frequently it is an appeal to "go easy" on Richard Helms, the former Central Intelligence Agency director who faces possible indictment on a perjury charge for lying to a Senate subcommittee.

The appeals come from journalists as well as politicians, from Democrats as well as Republicans, and from such political heavyweights as Averell Harriman, former New York governor and top federal official in Democratic administrations, and former Vice President Nelson A. Rockefeller, another former New York governor and a leading Republican for decades.

But Bell, in a lengthy interview, said the almost constant pressure applied by members of the Washington establishment in behalf of Helms will not deter him from "doing my best to vindicate the rule of law."

He said the Helms case is complicated because of the foreign affairs and national security implications, however, and has been difficult to resolve.

Bell hopes to resolve the question of prosecution in that matter and in two other sensitive cases—FBI burglaries and South Korean government influence-peddling among members of Congress—before U.S. District Court Judge Frank M. Johnson Jr. becomes FBI director early next year.

As establishment types are pressing Bell on the Helms matter, ordinary citizens are flooding him with mail in an attempt to persuade him to lay off the FBI.

"You wouldn't believe the reservoir of goodwill among the American public for the FBI," said Bell. "I get let-

ters from all over, and they don't want FBI agents prosecuted."

Bell receives many letters from friends who are contemporaries and who served with the FBI during World War II, when some FBI break-ins were justified officially on grounds of national security. "But it was a lot different then," said Bell. "People just don't want to take that into account. Most of them just want to leave the FBI alone now."

As for the Korean scandal, Bell said, there has been little pressure. "Everyone just wants us to get that one over with," he said. "Even the President. They say, 'For God's sakes, finish it.'"

Bell pointed out that he inherited all three of the sensitive cases from the Ford administration and said the investigations did not seem to be going anywhere fast when he took over the Justice Department.

As he accelerated the investigations, the pressure in the Helms and FBI cases increased.

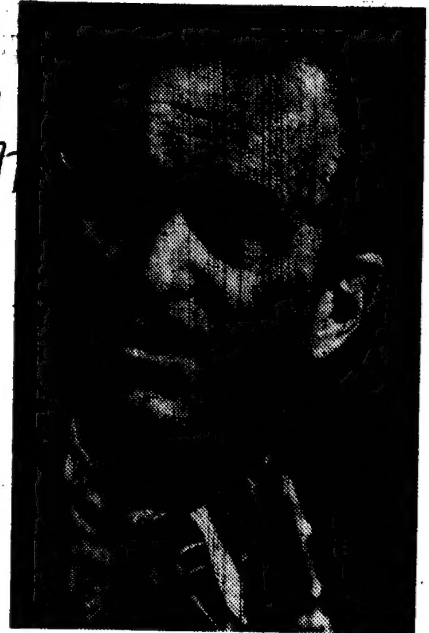
Veteran senators and other political figures who support Helms began to tell Bell that he did not "understand the system."

"They would say, 'You can't indict a man who has had 35 years of public service,'" Bell said.

At a recent party, CBS commentator Eric Sevareid told him, "It would be a shame if Helms is indicted." Bell replied: "I can't talk about that."

Some prominent Washington figures have been more public in their support of Helms. Hugh Sidey, Washington bureau chief of Time Magazine, has passionately defended Helms on television and in speeches.

William E. Simon, who served as Treasury Secretary in the Nixon and Ford administrations, recently stated that a legal defense fund established for FBI agents who might be indicted, also would provide money for Helms' legal defense if he were indicted.



RICHARD HELMS
... numerous VIP supporters

Bell, speaking at a Griffin Bell Day ceremony in his hometown of Americus, Ga., the other day, said the predicament he finds himself in concerning the sensitive cases he inherited reminded him of a story he had told President Carter, a story the President later related during a televised press conference.

"It involved a man who was charged with being drunk and setting a bed on fire," Bell said. "When the judge asked him to enter his plea, he said, 'I plead guilty to being drunk, but the bed was on fire when I got into it.'"

Bell also joked about the many stories involving the cases that have been leaked to the news media. He told of a recent Cabinet meeting at which he jokingly commented to Carter that he had nothing to report because most of what he knew was secret. The Attorney General quoted the President as retorting:

"Yeah, I read about your secrets every morning in the newspaper—the KCIA, the Helms case and the FBI cases."

The U.S. and Chile: An Ex-Ambassador Speaks Out

By Don Oberdorfer

BRIARCLIFF MANOR, N.Y. — Former U.S. Ambassador Edward M. Korry, charging that a Senate committee suppressed important facts and grossly distorted his role in opposing Salvador Allende in Chile, is preparing to sell his house, pack up and move abroad. Because of his loss of faith in this country's political system, he finds it "intolerable" to continue living in the United States.

"I was the only man in all of the U.S. government who was ready to swear under oath, with his detector attached, about the U.S. role in Chile, to provide the documentation, who was ready to account in full, ready to undergo public or executive session interrogation, ready to tell everything. I had no government pension, no ties to any group. I was never a member of any political party. I served three Presidents with equal devotion and dedication," the former official said in the rapid-fire cadences of outrage which have become his accustomed manner.

Why was this knowledgeable and eager witness not permitted to testify to the Senate Intelligence Committee until after its reports on Chile had been written and distributed, and then only briefly? Why was his later day-long executive session testimony — given at his insistence — kept secret by committee vote? Why was he not permitted to go before a federal grand jury as he requested following a lengthy deposition given to Justice Department attorneys?

Sen. Frank Church (D-Idaho), who was chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee at the time, said the committee had not heard Korry before distributing two Chile reports because the former ambassador had been interviewed by a staff member and submitted a long letter for the record. Korry was heard briefly in public session the day a committee report on covert action in Chile was handed out. According to the committee staff, Korry's subsequent executive hearing was kept secret by senatorial vote, taken by telephone last May 11, after "security objections" to its release were received by the Central Intelligence Agency and the State Department.

The Justice Department told Korry by letter Sept. 30 that he was not being called to testify before a grand jury in Washington, three months after he had been interviewed by a staff member.

The U.S. Ambassador in Chile, Edward M. Korry, is seen here in 1971 with Chile's President Salvador Allende.



Chile's President Salvador Allende, left, with Ambassador Edward M. Korry in Santiago in 1971.

was given a one-month suspended sentence and fined \$100 for withholding information about ITT's activities and CIA relationships in Chile from a Senate subcommittee investigating multinational companies.

Jobless and Bitter

KORRY IS CONVINCED that the stated reasons are subterfuge. "The only reason this has been covered up is that it would tell the honest truth about the political system in the 1960s and 1970s," he charged in an interview.

His statements cannot be dismissed lightly, for he is a man of long experience with politics, government and diplomacy. A United Press and Look magazine correspondent at home and in Europe for two decades, he served with distinction as U.S. ambassador to Ethiopia under Presidents Kennedy and Johnson.

After leaving Chile and the U.S. government, Korry was president of the Association of American Publishers and later of the prestigious United Nations Association of the United States.

Since the spring of 1974, when controversy over the U.S. role in Chile began to widen, Korry has been unemployed and, he maintains, unemployable in his chosen fields of journalism and public service.

Today he lives a spartan and largely isolated life in a restored 1700s house in this fashionable Westchester County suburb, reviewing and rethinking what he saw, heard and wrote in Chile and its aftermath. Sitting on the edge of an overstuffed chair or pacing the large bedroom-study, this tall, balding man backs up his charges with citations from a clutter of files, books, memoranda, draft book chapters and notes which he has laboriously taken to his version of

the disputed U.S.-Chilean historical record, in which he is depicted as the sponsor of a covert campaign against Allende. Late in November the Wilmington, Del., News Journal published a lengthy article based on Korry's charges, and another is planned.

Reports of the Senate Intelligence Committee, extensively covered in the press, attributed to Korry political planning and economic pressures against Allende. The committee cited a Korry recommendation to the State Department and CIA prior to the 1970 Chilean election, including a contingency plan for "a \$500,000 effort" to convince members of the Chilean congress not to vote Allende into office. (The money was never spent, and the congress did elect Allende after he won a plurality in a three-way race in the general election.) Korry was also quoted as warning Chileans that, if Allende came to power, U.S. economic reprisals would condemn the country to deprivation and poverty.

Korry does not deny the authenticity of the documents which were cited nor does he deny that he and his embassy played a role in seeking to prevent the election of Allende by the Chilean public. He charges, however, that these and other documents were taken out of context and mixed with half-truths, selective reporting and some outright lies by the Senate committee and press commentators, adding up to "a false view of history."

The popular conception that Allende was a democratic socialist brought down by U.S. covert pressures and operations is "a myth," Korry declared. In his view, Allende was an erratic and untrustworthy figure of the radical left, brought down in the end by his own rigidity and by the failure of the Soviet Union to give him necessary support. Korry said that U.S. activities against Allende declined substantially in the period of his ambassadorship, rather than increasing as is often believed.

The Roots of Involvement
THE STARTING POINT for a true understanding of the Chilean drama, according to Korry, is the deep, poorly reported and sometimes "illegal" involvement of the United States in the domestic affairs of Chile during the Kennedy and Johnson administrations.

President Kennedy and his White House staff decided in 1962 that it was in the U.S. national interest to elect the Christian Democratic candidate, Eduardo Frei, as president of Chile in 1964 rather than the Marxist Allende or a leftist candidate, Korry says.

This decision, he maintained, was arrived at not only through regular foreign policy channels, but also because it responded to the direct appeals of Roman Catholic prelates in both Rome and Santiago.

Following Kennedy's decision, "tens of millions of dollars" in U.S. foreign aid funds, as well as smaller amounts of CIA covert money, were funneled to Jesuit-led organizations in Chile "for the expressed purpose of electing the Christian Democrats." Among other evidence of this, Korry cited Agency for International Development funds provided to the Jesuit Center for Research and Social Action and the 1965 AID "policy and action paper" for Latin America. Korry quoted that document as saying, "U.S. assistance to Chile during 1963 and 1964, the presidential election years, was designed as a holding operation and to develop a political climate conducive to Frei's victory."

Dwarfing the official aid, according to Korry, was more than \$400 million in investments by U.S. multinational companies promised to Chile prior to the 1964 election on condition that Frei be elected and that U.S. financial guarantees be provided against expropriation. The most important firms proposing — and later carrying out — the investments were ITT and the Kennecott and Anaconda copper companies, Korry said.

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